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the assembly and of the houses to the governors are of course invaluable, but they leave much unexplained, and at times tend to confuse rather than enlighten the student. That the publication of the Board of Trade papers relating to Virginia would be a very large undertaking should not be allowed to deter the state from entering upon it, for until it has been done the study of Virginia colonial history will remain almost hopelessly handicapped. Let us hope that the splendid series of volumes containing the journals of both houses of the assembly is but the prelude to even better things to come.

THOMAS J. WERTENBAKER.

New England and the Bavarian Illuminati. By VERNON STAUFFER, Ph.D., Dean and Professor of New Testament and Church History in Hiram College. [Studies in History, Economics, and Public Law, vol. LXXXII., no. 1, whole no. 191.] (New York: Columbia University Press. 1918. Pp. 374. \$3.50.)

THE well-known reaction of American feeling from sympathy with the French Revolution to horror of its excesses and the panic made by the strident radicals of the new Democratic Clubs on this side of the ocean is not a new story, but it becomes new when read in the ample detail and interesting co-ordination of Dr. Stauffer's study—a work of admirable scholarship and excellent literary form. His treatment of the material makes it not a mere expansion of antiquarian lore but a contribution to the spiritual history of New England life. The situation which he investigates is one that is the more intelligible to readers at the present hour when suspicion and alarm are excited by rumors of secret Bolshevik machinations for the overthrow of the bulwarks of our social order. The historical problem to which Dr. Stauffer addressed himself was to account for the alarm felt and aroused by the Federalist clergy in New England in 1798 regarding the supposed sinister conspiracy of a secret order for the overthrow of religion and government. What were the grounds for such a belief, what the explanation of an easy delusion?

Dr. Stauffer explains the psychology of the situation by an elaborate account of the growing dismay caused in conservative clerical minds by the relaxation of Puritan standards, the invasion of the theatre and social dancing, the increase of intemperance, the rise of display and worldly fashion in a new mercantile aristocracy. Fear of this apparent but over-estimated disintegration was intensified by the ever increasing bitterness of dissenters from the Standing Order when, guaranteed full religious liberty by the national constitution, they found the rights of conscience still abridged by the New England states. The conservative clergy saw in all this a menace to the church. The dissenters were embittered by seeing their conscientious principles treated as masks of irreligion. Added to this came the indignation and dread caused by

French policy after Jay's Treaty with Great Britain and the notion even of men like President Adams that French plans for world-dominion "comprehended all America both north and south" and found ready tools in the growing Democratic party. Given the intense excitement over the X.Y.Z. despatches and the mad virulence due to the Alien and Sedition Acts, we are prepared to find in 1798 an "over-wrought tension of nerves" to which the most unlikely thing became credible and a suspicion of secret forces of conspiracy at work would be held on the slightest grounds.

Dr. Stauffer then offers a history of Weishaupt's order of the Illuminati with an account of the works of Robison and Barruel which alleged a direct connection of this secret order with the destructive violence of the French Revolution. This part of the work, based on a complete and discriminating use of an extensive but obscure French and German literature, makes a valuable contribution of knowledge to fill a gap in the material available in English.

The ground is thus laid for the story of the New England agitation initiated by Jedediah Morse in a fast-day discourse on May 9, 1798. In that year of intense political feeling Morse charged a plan of the French Directory to discredit American government, rehearsed the social danger of growing irreligion and vilifications of statesmen and divines, and on the basis of Robison's work argued "reason to suspect that there is some secret plan in operation hostile to true liberty and religion". This begins two years of newspaper controversy and pulpit deliverances involving the repute of Freemasonry and the fortunes of politicians. Even bolder declarations of a secret conspiracy in alliance with the destructive radicalism of Europe were made by President Dwight and others, but Morse held the centre of the scene by his futile efforts and discrediting failure to produce evidence of the conspiracy in America.

Dr. Stauffer's thorough investigation of the sources, his discrimination in dealing with utterances of political and religious passion, and his comprehension of an episode in its large relations make his book an instance of high scholarship and intelligence.

Since the mentality of Jedediah Morse was such a factor in his time, it is useful to recall that once again his morbid suspicion and credulity betrayed him, with the result of a disruption of the Standing Order into Orthodox and Unitarian. In 1815, with even more flimsy and irrelevant evidence, he alleged an organized secret conspiracy of the liberals to pervert Harvard College and the churches from the old faith, waking to fresh life the bitter spirit of dissension which after the War of 1812 had lost the political ingredient and could use only the *odium theologicum*.

FRANCIS A. CHRISTIE.